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Image Of The «Real» And «Ideal» State At Representatives Of Youth And «Adult» Political Subcultures In Russia

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Abstract

The image of the state is a significant component of outlook of a citizen of any country. It is formed in the process of socialization, transformed under the influence of social and political changes and influences on political behavior of a person. *Purpose:* comparative research of the image of the state formed in representatives of youth and «adult» political subcultures in Russia. *Subject* - characteristics of the image of the state. *Object:* Representatives of youth and «adult» political subcultures (200 people). *Research problems:* the analysis of scientific references to describe a semantic field of the concept «image of the state»; empirical research of characteristics of the image of the state formed in young citizens and senior citizens and their comparative analysis; to develop recommendations about formation and implementation of youth policy in Russia. *Method:* Method of the semantic differential, presented by 20 descriptors; Author's questionnaires were used for empirical research of political behavior: Questionnaire «Types of political behavior»; Questionnaire «Form of political behavior». *Results and conclusions.* In the research (held in 2012-2013) it is revealed that the images of the «real» and «the ideal state» as social and political institute in both selections do not coincide. It is inconsistent and does not reflect a condition of the society, embodying products of political work (stability, order, social protection, legality). *Recommendations.* Results of the research confirm the need of rehabilitation of the state as a central social and political institute in perception of the citizens of Russia. The consideration of those features is necessary for developing youth state policy.

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Keywords: state, the image of the state, citizen, youth and «adult» political subculture, political behavior.

1. Introduction.

The image of the state as the main social and political Institute is a significant component of an outlook of a citizen of any country. On the basis of this image a model «citizen – state» is constructed. It is formed in the process of socialization, transformed under the influence of social and political changes and influences on the political

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behavior of a person. The formation of the image is an active process in which the content of the image is enriched, refined and adjusted. Therefore, any social and political project that has a goal of creating the image of the state should be based on scientific research works. In addition, the image of the state performs instrumental function of adaptation to life in a particular state, as well as person's image of the future acts as an essential condition for life planning. Representatives of the youth and «adult» political subcultures belong to different generations of Russian society.

In this regard studying youth political culture proves to be especially important as the youth, being in the general context of social and political changes, has a special status that is determined by its social and political diversity. As Russian political leaders point out during press conferences, we should pay intent attention to youth as a main resource of society that will influence political decisions very soon.

2. Design

2.1. Objectives

Purpose: comparative research of the image of the state formed in representatives of youth and «adult» political subcultures in Russia. Subject - characteristics of the image of the state.

Object: Representatives of two dominating in the society of political subcultures: subculture of young people and subculture of adults.

In the research held in 2012-2013 the experimental group consisted of representatives of the youth. Respondents were aged from 18 to 25 years, total of 100 respondents (37 % men and 63% women).

The control group consisted of adults aged from 40 to 60 years with higher education and socially included in significant professional activity of technical and humanitarian profile, total of 100 respondents (40% men, 60% women).

Research problems:

The analysis of scientific references to describe a semantic field of the concept «image of the state»; empirical research of characteristics of an image of the state formed in young citizens and senior citizens and their comparative analysis; to develop recommendations about formation and implementation of youth policy in Russia.

3. Methods

Method of the semantic differential «the image of the state» presented by 20 descriptors constructed image of the state - real and ideal (Deineka O.S., Solovyeva M.A).

Author's questionnaires by M.A. Solovyeva [1] were used for empirical research of political behavior: Questionnaire «Types of political behavior»; Questionnaire «Form of political behavior».

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Description of a semantic field of the concept «the image of the state»

4.1.1. «Image» as a psychological category

In psychological researches for the first time the phrase «image of the world» was used by A.N. Leontiev. He defined this concept as an integrative phenomenon of consciousness and the sphere unconscious defining the relation of the subject to events and the outward things, to people, towards himself, to their vital prospects, defining as a result every person's strategy of life [2, 3]. Being a complicated formation, «image of the world» focuses the person in his everyday life [2]. S.L. Rubenstein marks out derivative properties of an image of representation: instability, fragmentariness and generality [4].

However A.N. Leontiev emphasizes that the consciousness of the person does not build objective reality, only an image of the objective world. The image is a semantic field, a system of values [2]. Thus, our idea of the world is not a direct reflection of reality; psychological, social and cultural features of consciousness cause it.

4.1.2. Concepts of the image of the state

The image of the country has always been and still remains a significant phenomenon, both individually and in the mass political consciousness. This phenomenon should be considered taking spatial-temporal parameters into

account. E.B. Shestopal points out that the political image is a reflection of the real characteristics of the object of perception, i.e. the political authorities, the personality of the leader and so on, and, on the other hand, the projection of the expectations of the subject of perception, i.e. citizens [5].

There are different concepts of the image of the state. R. Fisher determines the image of the state «as an organized social representation of the object in the cognitive system of the individual» [6, p.151]. For the first time notion of the concept of the image was used by K. Boulding in 1959 to explain the reasons of hostility of some states, proving the existence of images of other states in the international system.

L.V. Matveeva describes the image of the state as a «multi-faceted, multi-aspect and multi-level social representation in the picture of the world and the people in general, and in the individual» [7, p.97]. She notes that the primary method of functioning of such representation is stereotypes.

According to I. Semenenko, the image of the state includes an idea of the country that exists in the minds of its cultural field or in contact groups of the population. Those views form a whole picture, something like a «portrait» [8]. I.U. Kiselev also notes that the image is «in the form of recorded knowledge, reflected reality, it integrates into the outlook of the subject of perception» [9].

Therefore, the image of the state is a generic representation of the person of their country in the present and the future.

4.1.3. *Structure and functions of the image of the state*

Three groups of factors have impact on formation of the state image:

- 1) Objective (the actual situation in the country);
- 2) Subjective (contradiction to the national interests of the countries);
- 3) Psychological (stability of stereotypes).

Objective factors emerge from objective characteristics of the state. Those are variable and constantly correct. Subjective factors are connected with mental features of the subject of perception and are directed to treat cultural, ethnic, religious and other components of the image. Stereotypes express «the habitual relation of the person to any phenomenon developed under the influence of social conditions and previous experience» [10, c.447].

There are some approaches to consideration of the state image's structure in the Russian and foreign scientific researches. One of the main directions can be conditionally called «portrait». The image of the state is considered in this case as a set of «lines» (characteristics). For example, L.V. Matveeva [7] allocates the following components in the state image's structure:

- Representations about the living space;
- Representations about time;
- The image of self through the image of the leader, hero;
- The image of another person (friend vs. enemy);
- Representations of informational space;
- Representations of the inner world.

L.S. Mamut [11] notes that the image of the state as a consciousness unit consists of three components: descriptions (reality description), estimates (expressions of the relation to reality), pre-scription (act instruction). There is another approach to the studying of the state image's structure. It is based on modeling and means that the system of leading components that forms the state image in consciousness is defined by some model developed by the political authority according to the purposes of domestic and foreign policy.

Thus, the image of the state as a social and political institute is the most important component of the citizen's outlook. Besides, the image of the state performs instrumental function of person's adaptation to life in the specific state, and is also an image of the future for a person and acts as the integral condition of vital planning.

4.2. *Results of empirical research of the image of the «real» and «ideal» state formed in representatives of youth and «adult» political subcultures in Russia*

The study revealed that the images of the «real» and «the ideal state» as social and political institute in both selections do not coincide at all. For psychological interpretation of the obtained results we chose 12 of 20 most significant descriptors designing the image of the real and ideal state. As seen in the tables 1 and 2, the image of the real Russian state in both selections is negative. Young citizens of our country consider the state «immoral»,

«illegal», «faithless», «irresponsible», «unfair» and «unsafe». Representations of the state of citizens of the older generation at the present stage of development is «immoral», «illegal», «restless», «irresponsible», «dangerous», «unfair». We should note that young people are more uncompromising in their responds than representatives of the older generation. For adults the state still remains «native», despite all the negative characteristics. But for the Russian youth, the state is not «native» any more. In general, we will note that the revealed image does not reflect the condition of the society embodying products of political labor (stability, order, social protection, legality).

The image of the real and the ideal state of Russia in both selections disperses on key indicators. According to adults, the state has to be «trustworthy», «perspective», «fair», «quiet», «safe», «responsible», «legal» and «humane». In these estimates respondents are most unanimous. From the psychological point of view it also is the image of the political future for representatives of the older generation. Representations of young people about the political future are «perspective», «fair», «trustworthy», «responsible», «safe» and «legal» state. And in these political expectations young citizens of our country are quite unanimous.

Table 1. Basic statistics data technique «Image of the state» in a selection of representatives of youth political subculture

Descriptors - characteristics of the state	Real	state	ideal	state
	M	σ	M	σ
moral-immoral	-1,3	1,5	2,2	0,9
jural - illegal	-1,2	1,6	2,5	0,8
responsible- irresponsible	-1,5	1,3	2,6	0,8
	-1,1	1,5	2,6	0,9
safe-dangerous	-1,6	1,4	2,7	0,8
	-1,0	1,6	1,6	1,5
trustworthy- faithless	0,4	2,0	2,5	0,9
	-0,8	1,6	2,3	0,8
democratic-totalitarian	-0,3	1,8	2,4	1,0
	-1,6	1,5	2,7	0,7
native-foreign	-0,2	1,9	2,7	0,6
	-1,0	1,6	2,4	0,9
quiet-restless				
independent-dependent				
just-unfair				
perspective-hopeless				
humane-inhumane				

Table 2. Basic statistics data technique «Image of the state» in a selection of representatives «adult» political subculture

Descriptors - characteristics of the state	Real	state	ideal	state
	M	σ	M	σ
moral-immoral	- 1,0	1,7	2,5	0,9
jural - illegal	- 1,2	1,9	2,6	0,7
responsible-irresponsible	- 1,3	1,6	2,7	0,7
	- 1,3	1,6	2,7	0,6
safe-dangerous	- 1,2	1,7	2,8	0,4

	-1,0	1,6	1,9	1,3
trustworthy- faithless	0,7	2,1	2,4	0,9
	- 1,5	1,7	2,7	0,5
democratic- totalitarian	- 0,4	1,7	2,4	0,9
	- 1,3	1,8	2,8	0,5
native-foreign	0,0	2,2	2,8	0,4
	-1, 0	1,8	2,5	0,9
quiet-restless				
independent-dependent				
just-unfair				
respective-hopeless				
humane-inhuman				

4.3. Political behavior

Young people from all types and forms of political behavior have their priorities on political activity. It means that they are interested in policy, tend to analyze political processes and estimate decisions of political leaders.

For example, 68% (2006) and 74% (2012-2013) of respondents has the view of political problems and ways of their solution, and 22% (2006) and 17% (2012-2013) students even expressed readiness to be engaged in political activity professionally. We should note that 66% (2006) and 62% (2012-2013) of young people belongs with interest and respect for traditions of the country and feels a civil liability for destiny of their relatives. Students actively demand the accurate and consistent state policy of national values and priorities that form and formulate the purposes and the ideals of modern Russia.

Despite the expressed interest to policy, the youth does not show political activity, which maybe explained as political apathy. For example, only 4% (2006) and 5% (2012-2013) of respondents participates in meetings and demonstrations and only 5% (2006, 2012-2013) of young people is members of a political party or a political movement. Unlike youth, representatives of the elder generation are characterized not only by the expressed interest to policy, but also by higher level of political activity ($p \leq 0,001$).

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The image of the real and the ideal state of Russia developed both in young and an older generation cardinally disperses on key indicators. The image of the real Russian state in both selections is the negative. The expected image of the political future – the ideal state – among the respondents of the two selections is very close according to significant characteristics.

The youth political subculture is characterized by the potential political activity, which can be realized given a change of the political situation in the country. Character and form of manifestation of such activity will depend to a certain extent on the concept of the state youth policy and ways of its realization.

On the basis of the obtained empirical data recommendations about application of the received results to design and realization of the state youth policy in the Russian Federation can be formulated

- The need of rehabilitation of the state as a central social and political institute in perception of the Russian citizens,
- Within the concept of the state measures of youth policy should be directed on coordination of the public and personal purposes;
- It is necessary to be guided by conviction and proof methods to realize the strategy of youth policy concerning formation of youth values system, thus avoiding manipulative ways of impact on youth audience;
- While developing state standards of higher education in a cycle of humanitarian, social and economic disciplines it is necessary to include the subject matters which should help young people to be guided with political and cultural space of society for the purpose of achievement political and cultural maturity.

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